



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Alaska District

Public Notice of Application for Permit

Regulatory Division (1145)
CEPOA-RD
Post Office Box 6898
Elmendorf AFB, Alaska 99506-0898

PUBLIC NOTICE DATE: 7 March 2007
EXPIRATION DATE: 5 April 2007
REFERENCE NUMBER: POA-2006-1192-4
WATERWAY: Gulkana River

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received for a Department of the Army permit for certain work in waters of the United States as described below and shown on the attached plan.

APPLICANT: Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 2301 Peger Road, Fairbanks, Alaska 99709-5316. Point of Contact is Mr. Bob Effinger, Environmental Impact Analyst at (907)451-5294 or by e-mail at bob_effinger@dot.state.ak.us.

LOCATION: The proposed project is located within Sections 5, 6, 7, and 18, T. 9 N., R. 1 W., Copper River Meridian; Latitude 62.543° N., Longitude 145.510° W.; between Mileposts (MP) 148 and 159 of the Richardson Highway between Paxson and Glennallen, USGS quad: Gulkana C-3.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this project is to correct roadway deficiencies, extend the service life, and reduce operation and maintenance costs. The proposed project would correct roadway differential settlement caused by permafrost, improve surface drainage and correct roadway foundation problems.

WORK: Placement of 226,350 cubic yards of fill material into 35.2 acres of wetlands within 5.5 miles of the 11 miles of the reconstruction of the Richardson Highway between MP 148 and 159, consisting of:

- Widen the existing roadway from an average of 24 feet to 38.5 feet, providing two 19-foot wide travel lanes.
- Realign several locations as identified on sheet 1, to improve sight distance or reduce sharp curves.
- Install cross-drainage culverts and replace existing culverts in poor condition.
- Trailheads and pull-outs: MP 148.4, MP 153 and/or MP 153.6, MP 155.6 and MP 156.7 or MP 157.3.
- Placement of 3,150 cubic yard of ditch lining fill material (included into total fill, consisting of at least 50 percent by weight of the

stones greater than 3 inches but less than 8 inches) along 8,150 linear feet of ditches.

- Excavation of 64,830 cubic yards of material within 6,700 linear feet (8 acres) of wetlands within the road footprint and placed on the roadway side-slopes.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The last road upgrade of this portion of the Richardson Highway was in 1953 and road is currently substandard due to poor horizontal and vertical geometry, which results in poor sight distance, steep grades and sharp curves. Routine annual maintenance and operation costs incurred are high due to permafrost and inadequate cross-drainage, resulting in saturation and subsequent weakening of the existing road embankment. The proposed design and reconstruction would meet the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials standards established for the National Highway System routes.

The locations of the trailheads and pullouts were coordinated with the Bureau of Land Management, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks.

This proposed project is Phase I in a proposed three-phase project extending reconstruction of the Richardson Highway to MP 173.

MITIGATION: As a result of project planning, the applicant has incorporated into the proposed project the following mitigation efforts to reduce impacts to the aquatic environment:

- Increase roadway cross-drainage by installation of culverts and to replace existing damaged culverts.
- Minimize footprints in wetlands to the extent practicable
- Placement of Caribou crossing signs
- Preparation of an "Erosion and Sediment Control Plan."
- 78% of roadway realignments horizontal shifts would be confined to uplands.
- Roadway side slopes in wetlands would be confined to 3:1 or 4:1 to provide safe recoverable slopes while minimizing encroachment into adjacent wetlands.
- Temporary impacts would be minimized by limiting equipment access to 20 feet from the toe of the new slope
- All ground-disturbed areas would be seeded and erosion control measures applied as need to reestablish ground vegetation.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: A permit for the described work will not be issued until a certification or waiver of certification as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (Public Law 95-217), has been received from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation.

PUBLIC HEARING: Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, reasons for holding a public hearing.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) had previously coordinated the proposed reconstruction for the Richardson Highway from MP 149 to 173, in a letter dated December 22, 2005. The State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) concurred that no historic properties would be affected (Letter dated January 5, 2006, file

numbers: 3130-IR FHWA, 3330-6N GUL-289, -078, -071, -045, -092, and GUL-070. This consultation constitutes the extent of cultural resource investigations by the District Engineer at this time. This application is being coordinated with SHPO. Any additional comments the SHPO may have concerning presently unknown archeological or historic data that may be lost or destroyed by work under the requested permit will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: The Alaska District fully supports tribal self-governance and government-to-government relations between the Federal government and Federally recognized Tribes. This notice invites participation by agencies, Tribes, and members of the public in the Federal decision-making process. In addition, Tribes with protected rights or resources that could be significantly affected by a proposed Federal action (e.g., a permit decision) have the right to consult with the Alaska District on a government-to-government basis. Views of each Tribe regarding protected rights and resources will be accorded due consideration in this process. This Public Notice serves as notification to the Tribes within the area potentially affected by the proposed work and invites their participation in the Federal decision-making process regarding the protected Tribal right or resource. Consultation may be initiated by the affected Tribe upon written request to the District Engineer during the public comment period.

Note: The proposed Richardson Highway project from 148 to 173 was coordinated by the FHWA and the Native Tribes with their letter dated, May 9, 2005, FHWA file number F-071-3(10)63186.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: No threatened or endangered species are known to use the project area.

Preliminarily, the described activity will not affect threatened or endangered species, or modify their designated critical habitat, under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844). This application is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Any comments they may have concerning endangered or threatened wildlife or plants or their critical habitat will be considered in our final assessment of the described work.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The proposed work is being evaluated for possible effects to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) pursuant to the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1996), 16 U.S.C. et seq and associated federal regulations found at 50 CFR 600 Subpart K. The Alaska District includes areas of EFH as Fishery Management Plans. We have reviewed the January 20, 1999, North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Environmental Assessment to locate EFH area as identified by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

We have determined that the described activity within the proposed project area will not adversely affect EFH, including anadromous fish and federally managed fishery resources.

SPECIAL AREA DESIGNATION: None.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity and its intended use on the public interest. Evaluation of the probable impacts, which the proposed activity may have on the public interest, requires a careful weighing of all the factors that become relevant in each particular case. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to

accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. The outcome of the general balancing process would determine whether to authorize a proposal, and if so, the conditions under which it will be allowed to occur. That decision should reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, must be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. For activities involving 404 discharges, a permit will be denied if the discharge that would be authorized by such permit would not comply with the Environmental Protection Agency's 404(b)(1) guidelines. Subject to the preceding sentence and any other applicable guidelines or criteria (see Sections 320.2 and 320.3), a permit will be granted unless the District Engineer determines that it would be contrary to the public interest.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Please provide your written comments to the above address with this public notice reference number.

Comments on the described work, with the reference number, should reach this office no later than the expiration date of this Public Notice to become part of the record and be considered in the decision. Please contact Mr. Lloyd H. Fanter at the above address, or by telephone at (907) 753-2712, toll free from within Alaska at (800) 478-2712, or by email at lloyd.h.fanter@poa02.usace.army.mil if further information is desired concerning this notice.

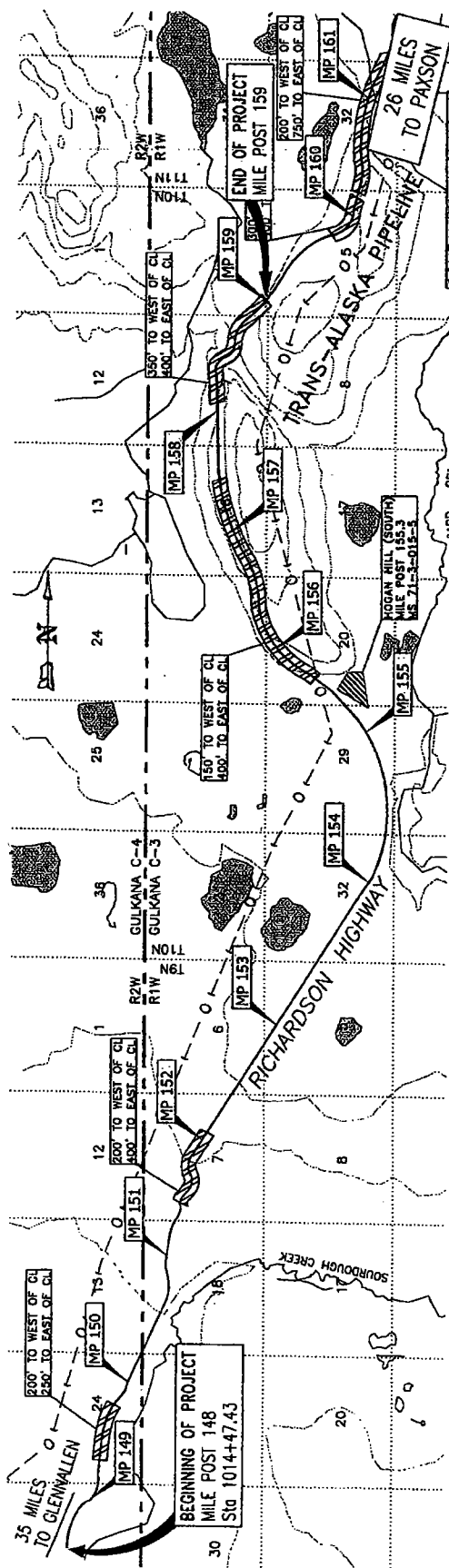
AUTHORITY: This permit will be issued or denied under the following authorities:

(X) Discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States - Section 404 Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344). Therefore, our public interest review will consider the guidelines set forth under Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act (40 CFR 230).

A plan and Notice of Application for State Water Quality Certification are attached to this Public Notice.

District Engineer
U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

Attachments



VICINITY MAP

N.T.S.
 SEC 13, 24 & 25 T9N, R2W
 COPPER RIVER MERIDIAN USGS
 GULKANA (C-4), ALASKA
 SEC 5-7, 18 T9N, R1W AND
 SEC 5-7, 18-20, 29 & 32
 T10N, R1W
 COPPER RIVER MERIDIAN USGS
 GULKANA (C-3), ALASKA

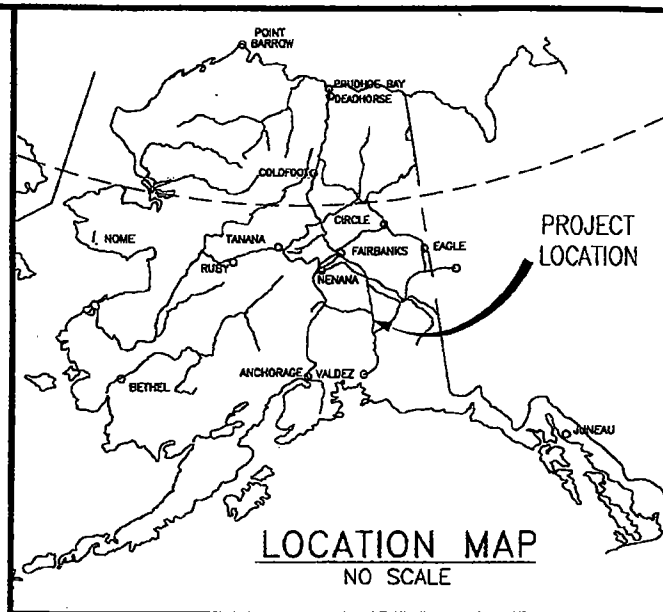
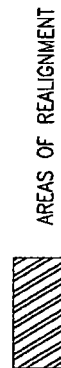


FIGURE 1

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| STATE OF ALASKA | |
| Department of Transportation and Public Facilities | |
| APPLICANT/AGENT: Chuck Howe | |
| 2301 Peger Rd. Fairbanks, Ak 99709 | |
| RICHARDSON HIGHWAY | |
| MILE 148 TO MILE 159 | |
| F-071-3(10) / 62342 | |
| VICINITY MAP | |
| DATE: 05/16/06 | SHEET: 1 OF 8 |

POA-2006-1192
 GULKANA River

TYPICAL SECTION A FILL WITH STABILIZATION BERM

LOCATION OF EXISTING ROADWAY VARIES

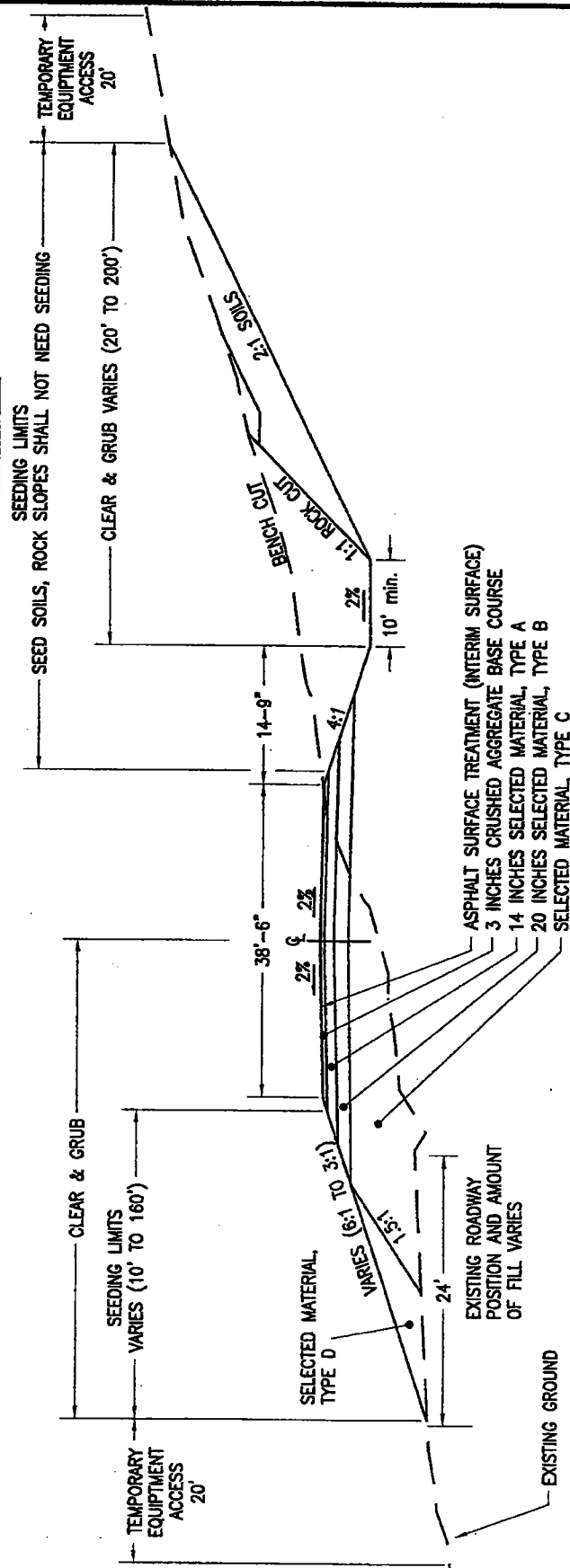
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TYPICAL FILL SLOPE

TYPICAL CUT SLOPE



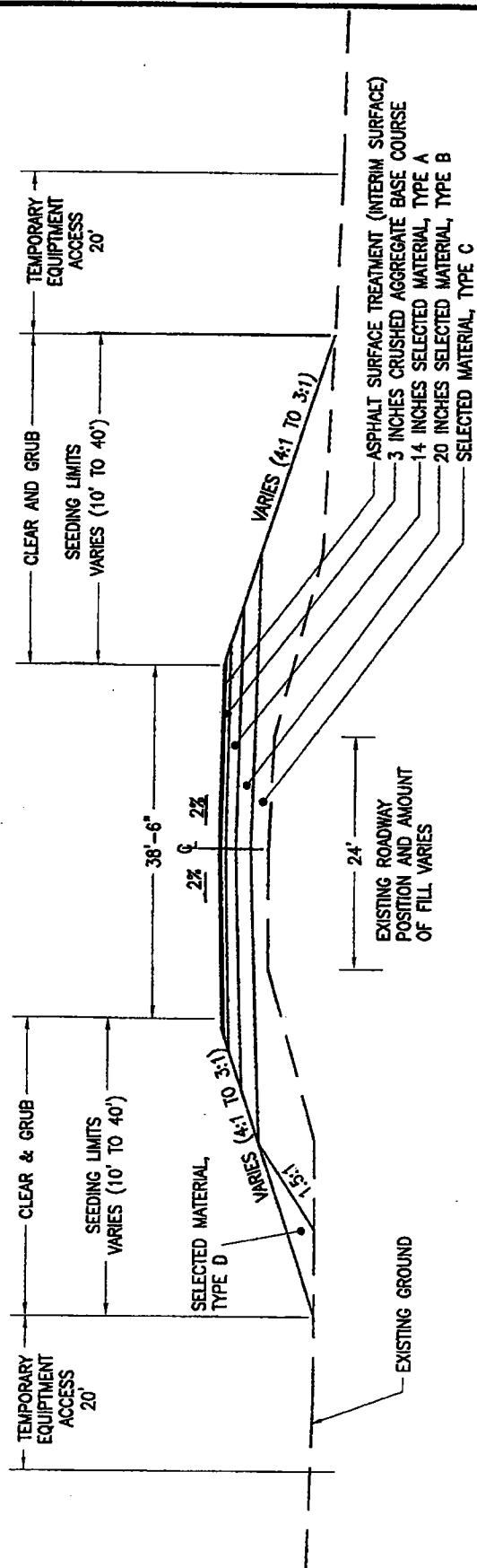
TYPICAL SECTION B CUT

LOCATION OF EXISTING ROADWAY VARIES

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| STATE OF ALASKA Department of Transportation and Public Facilities APPLICANT/AGENT: Chuck Howe 2301 Peger Rd. Fairbanks, Ak 99709 | |
| RICHARDSON HIGHWAY MILE 148 TO MILE 159 | |
| F-071-3(10) / 62342 | |
| DATE: 08/04/06 | SHEET: 3 OF 8 |

POA-2006-1192

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TYPICAL SECTION B WETLAND

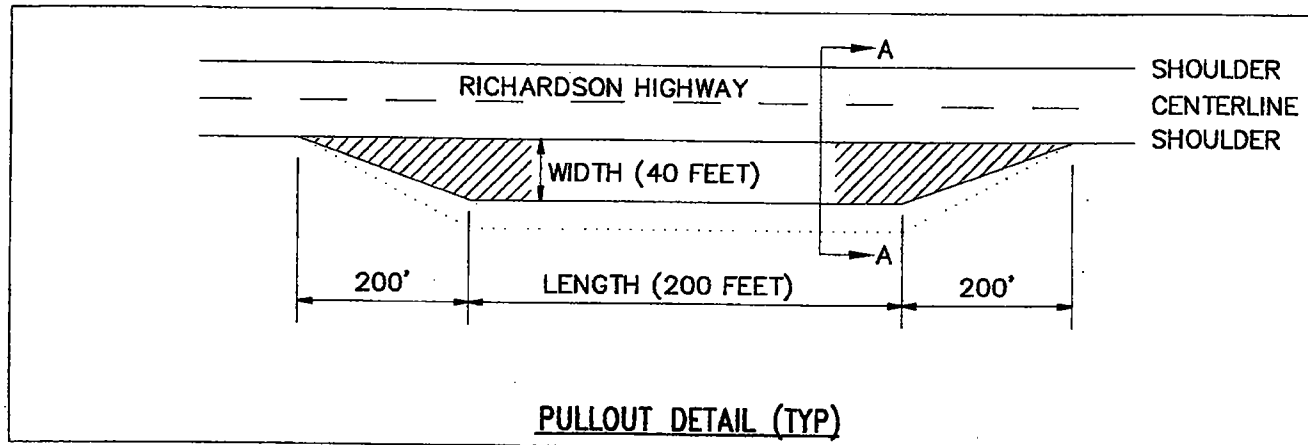
LOCATION OF EXISTING ROADWAY VARIES

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| STATE OF ALASKA Department of Transportation and Public Facilities APPLICANT/AGENT: Chuck Howe 2301 Peger Rd. Fairbanks, Ak 99709 | |
| RICHARDSON HIGHWAY MILE 148 TO MILE 159 | |
| F-071-3(10) / 62342 | |
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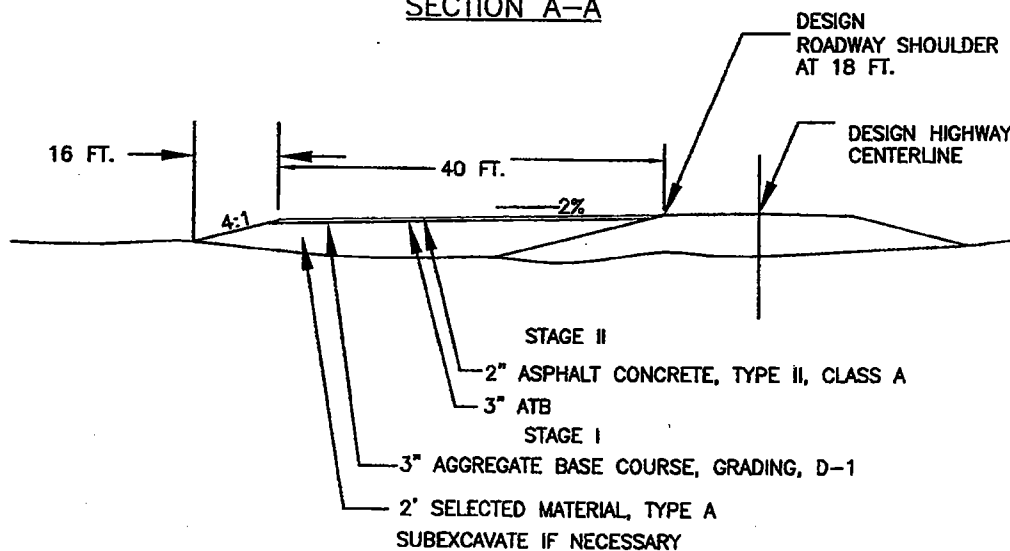
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HIGHWAY MAINLINE TURNOUT DETAILS

PLAN



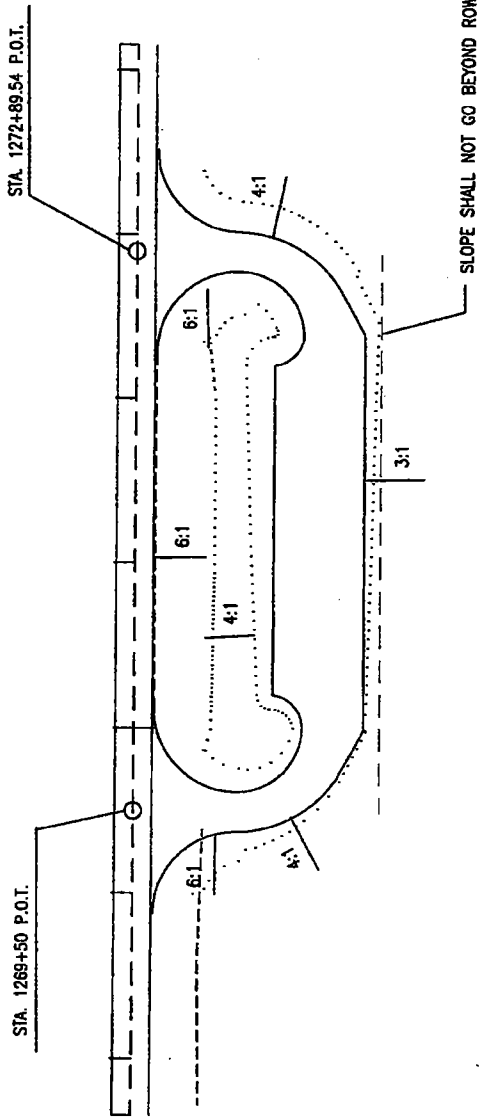
SECTION A-A



NOT TO SCALE

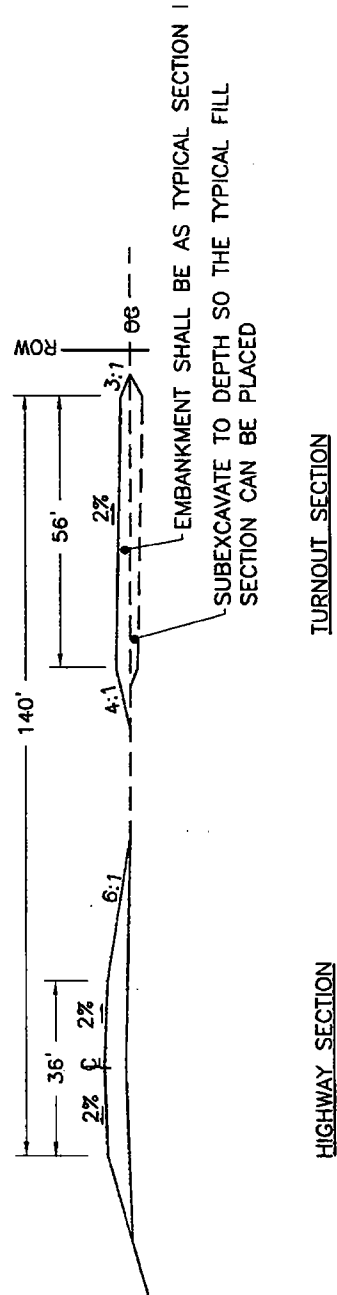
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| | F-071-3(10) / 62342 | |
| | DATE: 8/04/2006 | SHEET: 5 OF 8 |

POA-2006-1192



SEPARATED TURNOUT PLAN

~MP 153.6



TURNOUT SECTION

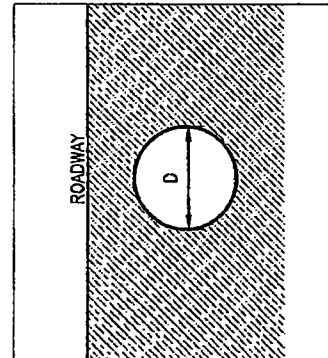
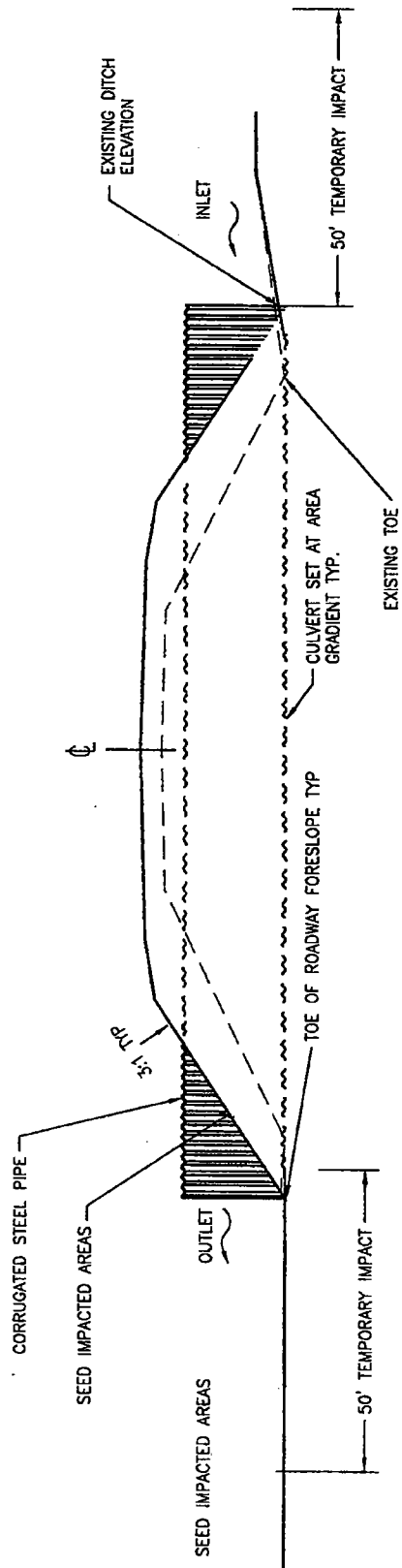
HIGHWAY SECTION

SECTION VIEW

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| STATE OF ALASKA Department of Transportation and Public Facilities APPLICANT/AGENT: Chuck Howe 2301 Peger Rd. Fairbanks, Ak 99709 | |
| RICHARDSON HIGHWAY MILE 148 TO MILE 159 | |
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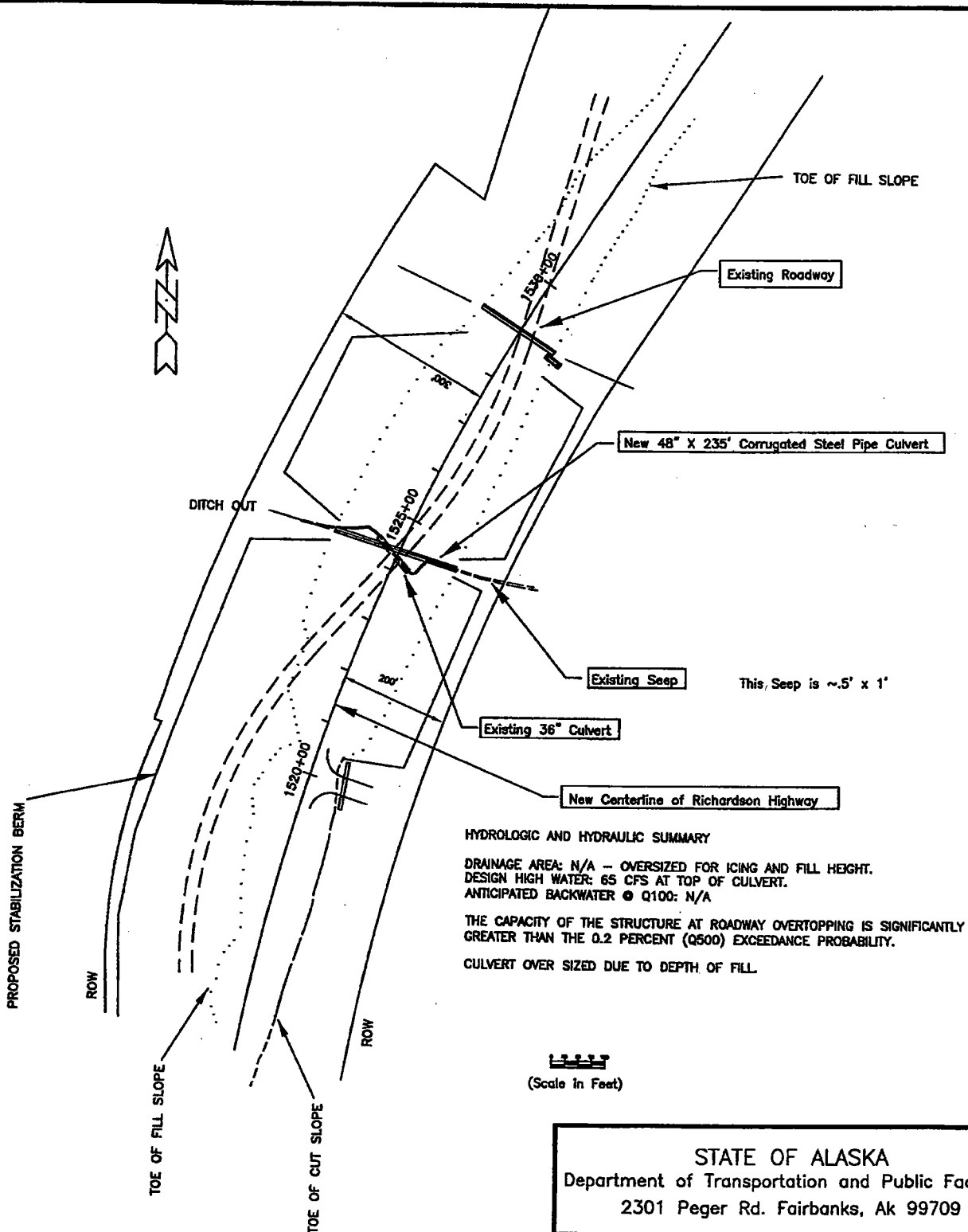
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| MILE 148 TO MILE 159 | |
| F-071-3(10) / 62342 | |
| DATE: 05/16/06 | SHEET: 7 OF 8 |

POA-2006-1192

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STATE OF ALASKA
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
2301 Peger Rd. Fairbanks, Ak 99709

RICHARDSON HIGHWAY
MILE 148 TO MILE 159

F-071-3(10) / 62342

DATE: 8/04/2006

SHEET: 8 OF 8

POA-2006-1182

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
DIVISION OF WATER
401 Certification Program
Non-Point Source Water Pollution Control Program

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
WQM/401 CERTIFICATION
555 CORDOVA STREET
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99501-2617
PHONE: (907) 269-7564/FAX: (907) 334-2415

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
FOR
STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION

Any applicant for a federal license or permit to conduct an activity that might result in a discharge into navigable waters, in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (PL95-217), also must apply for and obtain certification from the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation that the discharge will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. By agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of Environmental Conservation, application for a Department of the Army permit to discharge dredged or fill material into navigable waters under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act also may serve as application for State Water Quality Certification.

Notice is hereby given that the application for a Department of the Army Permit described in the Corps of Engineers' Public Notice No. POA-2006-1192, Gulkana River, serves as application for State Water Quality Certification from the Department of Environmental Conservation.

After reviewing the application, the Department may certify there is reasonable assurance the activity, and any discharge that might result, will comply with the Clean Water Act, the Alaska Water Quality Standards, and other applicable State laws. The Department also may deny or waive certification.

Any person desiring to comment on the project, with respect to Water Quality Certification, may submit written comments to the address above by the expiration date of the Corps of Engineer's Public Notice.